



## City of Rock Falls Tourism Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: 11/12/2025

Time Meeting Started: 10:01 am

Time Meeting Ended: 10:51 am

Members		Also Attended	
Chairman Tribley	P	Director Jones	P
Tom Henry	P	Assistant Amber Martinez	P
Betsy Bunning	A	City Administrator Blackert	A
Christina Wolfe	P	Director Lenox – Visit NW Illinois	A
Sam Kersey	P	Mayor Kleckler	P
Michael Myers	P		
Aldерwoman Vickey Byrd	P		
Alderman Nathan Stahr	P		

Call to order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting called to order by Chairman Tribley at 10:01 am.</li> </ul>	
Audience Request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None</li> </ul>	
Approved Minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The committee reviewed the minutes from October 8th, 2025, tourism committee meeting. Tom Henry moved to approve minutes as presented, second by Christina Wolfe motion carried.</li> </ul>	Minutes Approved
Updates	<p>Director Sam Kersey Chamber of Commerce</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hometown Holidays. Locations for all events have been moved to downtown to focus on the downtown/uptown businesses.</li> </ul> <p>Director Jones reported on Tourism updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spooktacular Halloween Lighted Golf Cart &amp; UTV Parade was October 18<sup>th</sup>. There were 24 entries including entries from Amboy, Morrison, and Savanna.</li> <li>Halloween House Decorating Contest – There were 6 total entries with a winner for “Best Themed” and “Scariest House”.</li> <li>“Winter Wonderland” AKA “Tour of Lights”- New this year we have opened contest to all Rock Falls businesses. One business currently entered.</li> <li>Kayaks &amp; Bikes – Kayak Rentals are closed for the season and locked up. Bike Rentals are closed for the season. Bikes have been taken to storage. One bike lock was vandalized in October 2025. Bike is Out of Order and will be used for spare parts. All bikes will go to Mead’s bike shop prior to 2026 season.</li> <li>Sponsorship thank you’s and Campaign for 2026 – All 2025 sponsors have received their thank you’s. 2026 Sponsor letters are in the works and plan to be delivered in December.</li> <li>Meetings Attended – All Things Carrol County Tourism – a social to interact with other tourism departments, economic developers, hotels and Air BNB’s. – Illinois Mainstreet Conference – Conference is in Dixon this week Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.</li> </ul>	<p>No Actions Needed</p> <p>No Actions Needed</p>
Event Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rock River Hospice &amp; Home – Festival of Trees requesting \$1,000.00. A discussion was made, a motion was made to approve \$1,000 by Alderwoman Vickey Byrd, second by Alderman Nathan Stahr. All in favor, via roll call. 7 yeas. Motion carried.</li> </ul>	Request of \$1,000.00 approved
Façade Grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None</li> </ul>	No Actions Needed

Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visit Rock Falls website had 7.5K views in the last 30 days. Top 3 sites: Calendar of Events, Festival of Trees, and Spooktacular Halloween Lighted Golf Cart &amp; UTV Parade.</li> <li>• Visit Rock Falls Facebook page had 161 new followers in the last 30 days for a total of 10,282 followers. The top post was Aurelio's Opening Day with 81,373 views.</li> <li>• Visit Rock Falls Instagram page had 12 new followers in the last 30 days for a total of 955 followers to date.</li> <li>• Visit Rock Falls TikTok has no new followers and a total of 1,020 followers.</li> <li>• Tourism Advertising – Podcasts with the Radar Free Press, Regional Media Commercials and talks, Shaw Local Radio commercials and talks, Travel publications and Shaw Media publications, Ads run in Northwest Quarterly with an article on Rock Falls. Paul Gierhart has an article on Eagles in Rock Falls and the Rock Falls Birding Trail.</li> </ul>	No Action needed
Old Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pole Banners – “Hometown Heroes” Application is almost ready. They are 2ft by 4ft and will be displayed on 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue we have 37 spots. Banners will be up for two years starting in May through November after Veterans Day. Electric department will order new brackets for all poles. After program is complete families will get banner returned to keep. Applications projected to be posted on the week of Thanksgiving. A motion was made to approve the Hometown Heroes Banner Program by Chairman Tribley, second by Tom Henry. All in favor, via roll call. 7 yeas. Motion carried.</li> </ul>	Hometown Heroes Banner Program approved
New Business	<p>Projected Rock Falls Tourism events for 2026</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• February 7 – Flock to the Rock - - “Hoo Haven” bringing an eagle, Native American presentation, Robert Storm Ice Sculptor back for year three, and Bats Incredible. They will be bringing a sloth that the public will be able to interact with and take a picture.</li> <li>• June 6 – Bellson Music Fest. 4 bands and a drum clinic. 2 bands have been booked. Director Jones is meeting with Josh Duffee to discuss further.</li> <li>• June 14 – Flag day/Celebrate America 250th – 1644<sup>th</sup> National Guard Military Band has been requested, waiting to hear back. Other activities have been discussed for that day including a flag ceremony by the Rock Falls American Legion Post 902.</li> <li>• End of June/first of July – Independence Day Celebration – Director Jones reached out to Sterling/Rock Falls Jaycee's prior to this meeting about making fireworks larger for America 250th. Alderman Nathan Stahr brought up concerns that Alderman Doane had regarding fireworks with a potential drone show.</li> <li>• July/August – 80's band as requested by the public. Vendors may be taken off of this event due to not a lot of interaction with public. Food vendors will be available.</li> <li>• August 14-16 – Aqua Festival in conjunction with Rock Falls River Chase. Having a weekend with on-the-water activities. Rock Falls River Chase boat driver has a band and would like to perform. Terry Hicks and Matthew Hicks are helping with this event.</li> <li>• August 29 – Art in the Park Sculpture Walk and Outdoor Art Gallery – possible wine tasting during event.</li> <li>• September 25 – Taco Throwdown Festival with ZOWA Live Wrestling, taco eating contest, and low rider vehicles. Great feedback from low rider vehicle group and they plan to attend next year.</li> <li>• October 3 – Lumberjack Show (co-op with Selmi's again). Women's Skillet Throwing contest will occur.</li> </ul>	No Action Needed

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• October 17 – Spooktacular Halloween Lighted Golf Cart &amp; UTV Parade. Discussion on making the event bigger with activities starting before parade.</li> <li>• October – Halloween House Decorating Contest</li> <li>• December – “Winter Wonderland” House Decorating Contest and Business Window Decorating Contest</li> <li>• November/December – Holiday Light Display @ Centennial Park (co-op with Coloma Park District)</li> <li>• Working on getting a Revolutionary War Reenactment possibly for America 250<sup>th</sup> Celebration. Civil War reenactment is a possibility if no response from Revolutionary War Reenactment.</li> </ul>	
Hotels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holiday Inn Express – Mike stated they had record breaking numbers in October and anticipates the same for November. Stated new hotel in Dixon is having a soft opening in December. Mike stated price integrity may be in effect when Dixon hotel opens. Mike is going to sponsor a band for the Eat’s ‘N’ Beats 80’s Night.</li> </ul>	No action needed
Committee Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tom Henry - Coloma Township Park District – Holiday Light Display. Twenty-five spots have been filled. Volunteers to be finalized in coming weeks. Opening night is November 28<sup>th</sup>.</li> <li>• Chairman Tribley – Announced he’s resigning as Tourism Chairman effective now due to other commitments.</li> </ul>	No action needed
Adjournment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chairman Tribley made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Tom Henry.</li> <li>• The meeting adjourned at 10:51 am.</li> <li>• No December 2025 meeting</li> <li>• Next meeting will be January 14, 2026.</li> </ul>	Meeting Adjourned

---

Committee Chairman